

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
MAY 24, 2022

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Fedler, O'Brien, Haff, Hicks, Wilson

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Rozell, Fisher

SUPERVISORS: Hall, Henke, Ferguson, Shaw, Nolan, Campbell, Hogan, Clary, Griffith
Debra Prehoda, Clerk of the Board

Al Nolette, County Treasurer

Melissa Fitch, County Administrator

AGENDA AS PRESENTED IN COMMITTEE NOTICE:

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Accept Minutes – April 19, 2022
- 3) Department Requests/Reports
 - A. Real Property – Part Time Assessor Position
 - B. Buildings & Grounds - Updates
 - C. Board of Elections
 1. August Primary (Unbudgeted Cost)
 2. Possible Inspector Pay Rate Increase Mandate by NYS
 3. Redistricting
 4. Increased Postage Costs
- 4) Policy/Procedure for Use of Video Conferencing
- 5) Other Business
- 6) Adjournment

Chairwoman Fedler called the meeting to order at 10:17 A.M. in the Supervisors classroom and via zoom.

The minutes of the April 19, 2022 meeting were accepted.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS/REQUESTS:

REAL PROPERTY – Laura Chadwick, Director, addressed the following items with the committee:

- Part Time Assessor Position – Advised the committee, she is bringing to the Personnel Committee a request to backfill a part time Assessor position. Appointed Assessors have a six-year term and she expects at the end of the current term in 2025 a shortage in Assessors. Elected Assessors are supposed to be trained to hold their position. It takes an Assessor approximately three years to be trained to become a certified Assessor going through the NYS Assessors Association training. If a town thinks an Assessor is retiring or leaving it is time to start looking for a replacement. The person has to be employed by a county, town, or state to start classes. She plans in next year's budget to start a program to hire some part time staff to start training to be Assessors. She has an idea of the status of the current Assessors going forward.
- New GIS website. Call office if experiencing any problems.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS – Matt Jones, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds, addressed the following items with the committee:

- The Department of Social Services American Rescue Plan funding will fund a lighting project for all of first floor of Building B and training rooms downstairs. A bid is going out for changing 405 fluorescence lights with LED lights. He is going out to bid this week with the work to be done by September 15th.
- Parks opening this weekend and three lifeguards short at Huletts and one at Lauderdale. They are actively looking for lifeguards. The cabin at Lauderdale is deteriorating pretty bad and he has reached out to the state and they are looking for us to get a professional estimate to the work that needs to be done. The twenty year lease from the State allowing the County to operate the park is expiring November 30, 2024. The cabin serves as the manager's office and breakroom for employees. He thinks the building is past fixing up. The State has been happy with us operating the park.

- Installation of the roof top units for the Law Enforcement Center began yesterday, should be 90% done by Thursday and finished next week.
- Fort Ann Barn – Five firms responded to the requests for proposal for engineering of the Fort Ann barn. The Town of Fort Ann also needs to approve the firm. The Treasurer stated also needed is approval for the Vice Chairman to sign two MOAs with the town of Fort Ann for the barn and the borrowing. The original study of the engineering suggested a 60/40 split. Responses from the following: LaBella out of Latham at \$470,000, CNS Engineering \$470,925, BCA Architects, Saratoga \$496,700, ME Engineering \$566,810 and Prime AE \$749,000. He has reviewed all the responses and interviewed starting with the lowest and recommends LaBella the lowest response. They will do design work, write construction contracts, prepare documents for going out to bid, DEC permitting, and all the testing for the ground work. This price is from start to finish to the commissioning of the building. This is a lump sum with different phases. They had to provide a timeline for how they will do this project. This will be a manufactured building; steel building to be assembled on site. Award contract based on a resolution from the town of Fort Ann and entering into an MOA. The County has put away \$5M for the two barn projects and will need to borrow for these projects. The Treasurer stated the Town of Fort Ann will get a better rate with the County borrowing the money. He stated the Town of Fort Ann would pay the County. The Budget Officer stated the financial advisers said Fort Ann would pay directly. The financing piece, the borrowing, will happen at a later date. In the MOA need Fort Ann to commit to building the building and need to discuss property that is owned by the town of Fort Ann. The County would be the lead agency. Mr. Wilson suggested a flow chart of the process would be helpful. A motion to accept the Superintendent of Buildings recommendation for the proposal for engineering services, LaBella, contingent upon the acceptance by the Town of Fort Ann, resolution and enter and sign a MOA, was moved by Mr. Wilson, and seconded by Mr. O'Brien. Discussion. The Superintendent stated the recommendation for the split on the project is 60/40. Any soft costs will be paid by each party. The Vice Chairman will represent and sign documents on behalf of the County to avoid any conflict of interest. The motion to accept the Superintendent of Buildings recommendation for the proposal for engineering services, LaBella, contingent upon the acceptance by the Town of Fort Ann, resolution to enter and sign a MOA, was moved by Mr. Wilson, seconded by Mr. O'Brien, and adopted.
- Middle Falls barn survey was completed this week, will submit to the town of Easton Planning Board tonight and public hearing next month for final approval. Hopefully a signed agreement next month. ME Engineering has started preliminary design of the barn.
- Public Defenders – ILS is a funding source for the Public Defender's office and funding can be used to remodel their space or leasing new space. The department has grown in the last few years and there is a lack of space in the municipal center so have been looking for commercial office space. They have found office space that would have enough space for six lawyers and a secretary at 346 Main Street. Mr. Hogan acknowledged that the building, 346 Main Street property, is owned by his brother. With funding available and lack of space at the municipal center, the Superintendent of Buildings recommends considering this option. The administration part of the office would remain at the municipal center for now due to the space available. The space opening up by this move might be utilized by IT who has a new employee coming in and a staging area for computer and possibly for the Department of Social Services who lack space. Burgoyne will be filled up with Public Health and WIC. If the committee thinks this is a good idea will move forward and get more information and numbers and come back to committee. Committee consensus was to proceed with getting more information.
- Law Enforcement Center roof is getting engineered. A budget amendment was done moving \$2M from General Fund fund balance into the capital plan to replace the aging/leaking roof. The engineering should be done by next month.

BOARD OF ELECTIONS – Tom Rogers and Jeff Curtis, Commissioners, addressed the following items with the committee:

- August Primary (Unbudgeted Cost) – Primaries in June and August. June 28th countywide primary, Democrats – Governor and Lt. Governor and Republican – Governor. A Democrat primary in the 21st District on August 23rd for that seat which was unscheduled and not budgeted for. The estimated primary cost is \$32,000 but if pay rate increases then \$42,000 to \$45,000.
- Possible Inspector Pay Rate Increase Mandate by NYS – Proposal to increase Inspectors pay rate to \$300 and this is still pending in committee.
- Redistricting – Districts were redrawn. The 45th Senate District will be represented by Senator Stec and there is a new 43rd District. Congressional district expanded.
- Increased postage costs as of July 1st.

Advising the committee of possible budget shortages and will address when the time comes.

POLICY/PROCEDURE FOR USE OF VIDEO CONFERENCING – The Governor's current executive order expires June 14th. The County Administrator asked if there is any interest in allowing video conferencing for meetings. Committee consensus was there is interest. Mr. O'Brien stated a quorum is needed in one or more public locations with proper notification. The local laws needs to be adopted to allow for video conferencing. The Clerk recommended that the Board and committees all follow the same procedure. The written procedures will be incorporated into the Rules of the Board and posted. Determination of an extraordinary circumstance will be made by each individual Supervisor as to the reason why they will attend from a non-public location and would then be allowed to vote if there is a quorum in a public location/locations. Mr. Shaw feels Supervisors are shirking their responsibility to represent their people by not attending meetings here. The public hearing on the local law is set for Friday, June 17th.

OTHER BUSINESS: None.

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 P.M.

Debra Prehoda, Clerk
Washington County Board of Supervisors

Use of Video Conferencing

Governor's Executive Order expires June 14th

- 1) Is there interest in allowing video conferencing for meetings when there are instances of extraordinary circumstances?

If not, no further action is required.

*Streaming (you tube) is allowable at live meetings, whether or not video conferencing is allowed.

- 2) If Board wishes to allow Video Conferencing for instances of extraordinary circumstances, a Local Law is Required.
- 3) Rules of the Board need to be amended to establish written procedures.

- "If videoconferencing is used to conduct a meeting, there shall be an opportunity for members of the public to view such meeting via video, and to participate in proceedings via video conference in real time where public comment or participation is authorized and those participating in videoconferencing shall have the same public participation or testimony as those participating in person. "